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# Naval Postgraduate School - Engaging Women's Leadership Workshop Held in Sarajevo

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## Engaging Women’s Leadership Workshop Held in Sarajevo

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Article by Maggie Spivey

The “Engaging Women’s Leadership in Security and Defense Institution Building: Curriculum Development Workshop” was held March 29-31 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), at the Hall of the Armed Forces.

The workshop is part of the ongoing 3-year initiative between the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), the designated U.S. Partnership for Peace Training and Education Center (USPTC), and the BiH Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC), the designated BiH PTC. During this time, the two institutions have been collaborating on the development of a curriculum on Engaging Women’s Leadership in Security and Defense Institution Building with the delivery of the pilot course taking place in the fall of this year.

Workshop participants included BiH, regional, and international representatives relevant to security, defense, peacekeeping, education, and training. Select attendees from the previous events held in 2010 participated in order to continue to draw upon their experience and expertise; build the body of knowledge related to this topic; and strengthen the network of engaged members.

“We’ve had consistent input from those who have been involved from the beginning of the project. We’ve had the opportunity to connect with people, and they understand what we’re doing,” stated Mr. Peter Bertelsen, GDIT Project Manager supporting the Naval Postgraduate School’s USPTC Program Office and managing the initiative.

Dr. Maria-Dubravka Pineda, NPS Visiting Professor, facilitated the workshop and presented a detailed outline of the topics and format of the proposed course, including a distributed learning module along with in-residence and continuing education components. She addressed the desired composition of the students as well as the necessary steps for an effective agency outreach to create awareness and a sustainable and committed student body and professional corps.

Further, the workshop provided participants a progress update on the collaborative initiative between the two PTCs and highlighted the achievements and updates of the regional institutions along with the strategic and operational importance of the initiative to BiH and the region.

With the support of some of the top defense leaders in BiH and NATO, the initiative has some additional impetus. Among those speaking in the program included the BiH Minister of Defense, Dr. Selmo Cikotić, along with the Deputy Defense Minister for Resource Management, Ms. Marina Pendes. Vice Adm. Carol Pottenger, Deputy Chief of Staff Capability Development, NATO Allied Commander Transformation, also spoke via teleconference, providing insight into the leadership of inclusion and participation.

“The feedback from participants has been extremely positive. All are very excited to be involved in development of this curriculum for various reasons. We had participants from different Ministries of Defense, Security, and Interior as well as academics and NGO representatives,” explained Bertelsen. “All come with their own personal experiences, interests in the topic, and desire for increasing women’s leadership in Bosnia. They see the benefit to the curriculum being developed and how it will positively impact the country.”

With a “Train the Trainers” Workshop set to take place in late June, NPS and the PSOTC are taking the final steps before launching the pilot course in late fall. Continued support and enthusiasm for the initiative bodes well for the first cohort’s enrollment.

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Photo credit: Mr. Nermin Dedic